

Dominican Republic – 2010

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UN Youth Delegate Programme

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83. **Ms. Martínez** (Dominican Republic), speaking on behalf of the youth of her country, said that although the youth were a highly vulnerable demographic group, they were also the cornerstone on which the future of the world rested. The effects of the many difficulties they were currently experiencing, such as high unemployment, environmental degradation, armed conflicts, hunger and lack of education, would be felt by the current and future generations. [*12*]

84. Most developing countries were striving to overcome colossal obstacles in order to increase school enrolment of children. It was essential to meet the social, economic and political conditions guaranteeing access to education for all and thus contribute to the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals. It was also vital to put in place parallel educational systems to offer education to young people who suffered from various forms of discrimination, in particular young persons with disabilities and members of indigenous peoples or ethnic or linguistic minorities.

85. **Ms. Zapata** (Dominican Republic) said that the unfulfilled promises of cooperation made by developed countries and the burden of foreign debt on the budgets of developing countries had prevented the latter from financing policies and projects that might genuinely improve the lives of their peoples. The United Nations must encourage the establishment of conditions that would promote the development of young people, starting from childhood. Instead of seeking to analyse shortcomings and omissions, efforts should be made finally to eliminate mechanisms for the exclusion of young people and to minimize inequalities.

86. The citizens of today's world should not only integrate themselves into society but also simultaneously participate in the development of society. Young people held the key to human development, sustained economic growth and technological innovation. Governments must therefore guarantee respect for their human rights. In the absence of immediate action on their part, the new generation would take it upon itself to initiate the required transformation. The United Nations should involve young people in the decision-making process and allow their participation in the medium and long terms on a regular — not ad hoc — basis.

87. The International Year of Youth was the ideal time to review government policies on youth and promote youth participation. Young people had the necessary will and capacities; they simply lacked the opportunity to make use of them.

